

Community Center Public Comment Responses Updated April 21 2021

The **Community Center Building Committee** within the Town of Upton (Town) held an open Public Comment Period on the proposed new **Upton Community Center Project** proposed to be constructed at the current Town owned parking lot property at 9 Milford Street adjacent to the VFW and Veteran's Memorial playground. The Public Comment Period was open from **March 10, 2021 until March 26, 2021**.

Included below are the **questions** that were received during the public comment period and the responses that were reviewed and approved by the Community Center Building Committee at their meeting on April 20, 2021.

| # | Public Comment / Question | Response |
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| 1. | <p>a) Will Upton residents be able to book the program room space?</p> <p>b) Is access to the building open during specific hours? If so, what would they be?</p> <p>c) Would there be any likelihood of having Adult Upton Exercise class space available?</p> <p>d) Will food and beverages be permitted on premise?</p> <p>e) How do you balance the need for library "quiet" against the possible noise of other activities?</p> <p>f) Would there be internet/computer access on site?</p> <p>g) What would draw people to go there? Could you consider a coffee kiosk, or smoothie kiosk where people can go and</p> | <p>(a) The exact policies and procedures governing use of the building have not been finalized. As a town-owned facility housing multiple departments, several elected and appointed boards will have authority to set policies, including the Board of Selectmen, Board of Library Trustees and Council on Aging.</p> <p>Over the last two years, the boards and departments have had extensive discussions about how we intend the building to operate, and a joint steering committee has been appointed to make recommendations.</p> <p>"We are happy to share our personal objectives and intentions for the building's operation, but all policies will be subject to approval and revision by the elected officials." - Matthew and Janice</p> <p>(b) "My intent as Library Director is to expand the library hours to match the current CoA hours, plus remain open 3 evenings per week and Saturdays. The design of the building should make these hours achievable with the existing library staff. The building is equipped for after hours access to the great room and adjoining restrooms while the rest of the building remains secured." - Matthew</p> <p>(c) Both the great room and the program room have adjoining furniture storage rooms so all tables and chairs can be easily removed when needed. Both spaces can function as open floorspace, table seating or auditorium style seating.</p> <p>"I look forward to seeing the community generate activities and programs to fill these spaces, in addition to the schedule of events we are already planning!" - Matthew</p> |

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| | gather inside or outside with a coffee or smoothie? | <p>Storytimes for various age groups, Technology classes, Book groups and other interest groups such as crafting clubs. Multimedia presentations such as lectures or workshops, Art classes and galleries, Meals though the meals on wheels program and special events such as pancake breakfasts and spaghetti suppers, Exercise classes including yoga, tai-chi, chair exercise. Health clinics, tax preparation and legal aid clinics. Cooking and nutrition classes. Teen/Tween and afterschool activity groups. Evening and weekend programs. Collaboration with Recreation Commission.</p> <p>(d) Current library policy allows food and drink to be brought in and consumed anywhere in the building except for directly at the computer workstations. The CoA serves meals and refreshments at events, so we expect similar policies in the new building.</p> <p>(e) Libraries have tended to become more active and less 'quiet' over the last decades. "The only group I've had to 'Shush' in the current library is my rambunctious lego building club." - Matthew</p> <p>The proposed community center has sound-dampening acoustical materials on many wall and ceiling surfaces, and we have attempted to identify and provide natural separation for quiet areas. The children's area, program room and business center will be active areas on the south end of the building (and connect to the playground outside), while the adult collection, study rooms and soft seating on the north end will be quieter areas.</p> <p>(f) Current plans include 7 public computer workstations (with space to add more up to 11). A business center with public copier / scanner / fax machine, along with supporting tools such as paper cutter, diecut, long arm stapler.</p> <p>LCD screens for public use in the conference room and one study room. Guest wireless network throughout the building and grounds. Electric car charging stations in the parking lot. Plentiful charging outlets in the seating areas.</p> <p>"A focus of our planning and design has been on providing the infrastructure to easily install future technology. (for example, we have no plans to include a 3-D printer, but the business center could accommodate one in the future.)" - Matthew</p> |

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| | | <p>(g) Having a small cafe or coffee bar inside a library is often suggested as an amenity and revenue source. Librarians have found that these operations are usually only successful in large institutions such as Boston Public Library.</p> <p>The community center has sink and counter space for offering refreshments during events, but we'll rely on local businesses within the downtown area to provide commercial food and beverage opportunities to residents.</p> <p>If the Council on Aging forms a Friends group (fundraising support organization), there may be an opportunity to use a cafe as a fundraiser.</p> |
| 2. | Any room for pickleball courts in any current or future plans? | On this site, the design includes active recreation on the redesigned, accessible playground, and supports the VFW ballfields. The committee hopes there are other opportunities in town for construction of active recreation, such as Heritage park or the 'Trask Property', which was donated to the town for the express purpose of recreational activities. |
| 3. | <p>(a) What is the snow removal plan? Where will snow be pushed during the winter months to ensure that access to parking and the playground are not significantly diminished?</p> <p>(b) What safeguards are in place regarding the slope of the roof over the COA entrance in the event of heavy rain, snow and ice?</p> <p>(c) Does the building utilize a gutter system that allows for storage of rainwater so that this resource may be used in the surrounding landscape?</p> | <p>(a) The proposed plan has been reviewed by the DPW, which will be responsible for snow removal. Areas of the parking lot have been identified as snow storage locations if needed.</p> <p>Resurfacing of the playground, with proper care, will allow for easier snow removal and a longer usable season than the existing playground.</p> <p>(b) A canopy similar to the main entrance canopy – though smaller scale - is being added to the entrance to provide cover from inclement weather and snow.</p> <p>(c) A rainwater recapture system (rain barrel collecting roof run off) and electrical car charging stations are included in the project.</p> |
| 6. | <p>(a) Patrons will already be in their cars to go to the library and it could be located anywhere in town. Westboro Road town owned land? Corner lot of Maple and Pleasant? Trask land as it becomes available?</p> <p>(b) Site Issues. Will extensive radon mitigation be required?</p> | <p>(a) During 2015 and 2016, a library feasibility committee extensively studied the town looking for possible sites to construct a library. All town-owned parcels were reviewed and two RFPs seeking privately owned sites were publicized, and all responses were reviewed. Key criteria for the review included: acquisition cost, proximity to the center of town, size of parcel, access to utilities, suitability for building and site development costs.</p> <p>Since that time, the town completed the downtown vision process, adopted the Upton Center Business District zoning changes, and the community center design evolved away from the requirements of the construction grant program, all of which</p> |

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| | | <p>increased the benefits of the Milford Street site.</p> <p>To briefly address other sites reviewed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Westborough Rd town owned parcel - distant from center of town, not on town water / sewer. 2. Maplewood Cemetery - committee unable to negotiate a mutually beneficial agreement with landowners. 3. 'Trask Property' - the estate willed to the town contains restrictions that would not allow this project to be built on the site. (Library use does not qualify as 'recreational') <p>(b) No, radon mitigation is not required.</p> |
| 9. | <p>Interested to understand the goal/usage of this space.</p> <p>(a) Is it always open?</p> <p>(b) How do we secure it?</p> <p>(c) How do we prevent vandalism or improper use of the space (kitchen comes to mind with burned food) overflowing toilets, etc?</p> <p>(d) Is it appropriate for those using the lower fields can use this space or restrooms during events?</p> <p>(e) Is it only to be used by residents? What organizations or individuals can rent some or all of it? What is the planned fee structure for residents/non residents? What regulations will be created and how they will be enforced (25+ for kitchen usage, etc.)</p> <p>(f) It can currently be tough to take a left hand turn out of that parking lot where the current</p> | <p>(a, b, c, d, e)</p> <p>The exact policies and procedures governing use of the building have not been finalized. As a town-owned facility housing multiple departments, several elected and appointed boards will have authority to set policies, including the Board of Selectmen, Board of Library Trustees and Council on Aging.</p> <p>Over the last two years, the boards and departments have had extensive discussions about how we intend the building to operate, and a joint steering committee has been appointed to make recommendations.</p> <p>"We are happy to share our personal objectives and intentions for the building's operation, but all policies will be subject to approval and revision by the elected officials." - Matthew and Janice</p> <p>"My intent as Library Director is to expand the library hours to match the current CoA hours, plus remain open 3 evenings per week and Saturdays. The design of the building should make these hours achievable with the existing library staff. The building is equipped for after hours access to the great room and adjoining restrooms while the rest of the building remains secured." - Matthew</p> <p>(e) "My intent as Library Director is to have the three quiet study rooms and conference room available for drop-in use or reservation by the general public with no fee during the library's open hours. The programs room, great room and kitchen will most likely be offered for community use under similar regulations and fee schedule to those of the current Town Hall spaces." - Matthew</p> |

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| | <p>exit is. Will it be allowed to take a left hand turn as the picture on page 13 shows a car exiting the building?</p> <p>(g) What is the current usage of the library? Data that can be shared?</p> <p>(h) What staffing and cost considerations are there for indoors and outdoors? What additional costs like insurance are there for the facility? Someone gets injured onsite, snow removal, etc.?</p> <p>(i) Is there opportunity to accent or enjoy the water that runs adjacent to the property?</p> <p>(j) What about a patio that is on the street side for more visibility to people driving by or passersby on the use of the space?</p> | <p>(f) We believe the parking lot is an improvement on the current parking lot. A traffic engineer is evaluating the entrance drives and sight lines and their findings will be revealed at the Upton Planning Board Hearing for Site Plan Review.</p> <p>(g) As of July 2020, 4,438 Upton residents had library accounts. Upton is a member of a library network that provides over 8 million physical items and 130,000 digital items. During an average week in 2019 at Upton Library, 719 physical items and 183 digital items were borrowed, there were 377 visits to the library, 46 reference questions answered, 53 people attended programs and 43 people used public computers. We look forward to providing increased services to residents once COVID restrictions are lifted and the new community center expands our services.</p> <p>(h) The efficient single story design of the building means the new community center can operate with the existing Library and CoA staff, until the town expands services in the future. Outdoor parking lot, lawn and playground maintenance will continue to be performed by the DPW, as they maintain the existing property. Facility and grounds will be covered under the Town's existing insurance policy. There may be an increase in insurance premium to add a new building.</p> <p>(i) The community center design has a long window wall with counters, tables and soft seating facing out towards Center Brook, and a walking path and patio between the building and the brook that leads to the playground. The nature play area is suited for connection to any future walking trail or footbridge over Center Brook.</p> <p>(j) The community center design locates the narrow end of the building along Milford street, providing an aesthetically pleasing street presence, and maximizing the available space for parking and playground. Patios for outdoor seating are located behind the building near the playground, and on the west side between the building and Center Brook, which will provide enjoyable outdoor space with a view of the brook, protected from street noise and car traffic.</p> |

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| 13. | I do wish we could include a mother's nursery room or area, where mom's can peacefully breastfeed their babies. It's awful to have to use a bathroom for those needs. | One of our multi use quiet study rooms will be equipped with shades / blinds for privacy and could be used for this purpose. |
| 14. | Can the existing Senior Center or Library be sold with the proceeds going towards new project? | <p>The current Senior Center is located in a leased building, which is not owned by the town. The current lease expires in 2029, and any improvements made to the space become the property of the owner, a private management company.</p> <p>The current library occupies one floor of the Knowlton Risteen building, which is owned by the town. The upper floors contain town offices, storage space, and the Historical Society museum. The usage, maintenance and disposition of the building are controlled by the Board of Selectmen. There are no plans or timeline in place, but it is theoretically possible that if the other functions were relocated the building could be sold or repurposed.</p> <p>If the Knowlton-Risteen building does leave town control in the future, there is a designated spot inside the Community Center that could accommodate the stained glass window if desired by the town.</p> |
| 16. | Inside the library, I'm wondering if the restrooms could be unisex, to be more inclusive. | There is a public unisex single occupancy restroom inside the library that includes a changing station. |
| 18. | <p>(a) Have we considered costs to bus users to center?</p> <p>(b) My understanding is we have a very low current lease cost for the senior center. Why pay for a new one?</p> | <p>(a) "The proposed location for the new community center is in the center of downtown, accessible to all of the over 1,200 elders living in Upton. Transportation to CoA programs will be available free of charge on the CoA Van for elders from Millhaus, Coach Rd apartments or any other location in town." – Janice</p> <p>(b) The current Senior Center is located in a leased building, which is not owned by the town. The current lease expires in 2029, and any improvements made to the space become the property of the owner, a private management company.</p> |
| 19. | <p>I am wondering which entrance will be most accessible to the playground and whether there has been consideration of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stroller parking • coat racks or cubbies | Coat racks in the vestibules and outside the great room. Cubbies for personal possessions in the children's activity area. Strollers take a lot of floorspace, but we have some space in the circulation spine and children's area and we encourage families to use our outdoor space on the patios for strollers. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> family-friendly restrooms with changing tables in both the men's and women's rooms | There is a public unisex single occupancy restroom inside the library that includes a changing station. The vestibule restrooms are traditional multi-occupancy gendered restrooms with changing tables that meet all accessibility and building code standards. |
| 20. | Not sure if possible in a public building, but space for a small cafe that could be rented to interested business would be awesome and could be a way to generate revenue and recoup some costs. | <p>Having a small cafe or coffee bar inside a library is often suggested as an amenity and revenue source. Librarians have found that these operations are usually only successful in large institutions such as Boston Public Library.</p> <p>The community center has sink and counter space for offering refreshments during events, but we'll rely on local businesses within the downtown area to provide commercial food and beverage opportunities to residents.</p> |
| 21. | <p>(a) Please engage a consultant to review green energy alternatives for construction, heating, cooling, and lighting.</p> <p>(b) Will the current rooftop design support solar panels or solar tiles without the need for structural improvements?</p> <p>(c) Is there enough space to someday retrofit the mechanical room to support a geothermal heating and cooling system? If a geothermal system were installed in the future where would the wells likely be located?</p> | <p>(a, b, c)</p> <p>The Building Committee received many comments from town officials and residents asking about the 'green friendly' features of the project. While the project is not pursuing the LEED certification process (which incurs additional reporting and certification costs), the designer and committee are keeping LEED goals in mind, and have identified many areas where the proposed design would qualify for LEED points and LEED certification.</p> <p>Geothermal heating was evaluated as one of three options for the building's HVAC systems. Our preferred displacement ventilation system scored best on lifetime cost. The displacement system also provided significantly better contaminate control inside the building.</p> <p>Solar panels are not included in the project scope, but could be installed later.</p> <p>A rainwater recapture system (rain barrel collecting roof run off) and electrical car charging stations are included in the project.</p> <p>The design energy model indicates that the building as designed will consume greater than 40% less energy than a baseline building fully meeting the stringent Building Code and Energy Code requirements. This building will perform 40%+ better than another code compliant building. The project design documents have been forwarded to the local utility company to take advantage of their energy rebate programs, which essentially pay the Owner for energy cost savings measures.</p> <p>(b) Code requires a structural review for future solar panel installation</p> <p>(c) The location of the mechanical room does not lend itself to the installation of a future geothermal system based on access for the well drilling and horizontal piping.</p> |

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| 27. | One comment/concern is that I don't see the Historical society museum in the plans to be in the new building. Is that truly the case? | <p>The Upton Historical Society, which is a private non-profit organization distinct from the Historical Commission, currently occupies 2,100 square feet of space including the Historical Museum. The amount of space needed to adequately house and display their collections was not able to be included in the Community Center design.</p> <p>The building committee hopes that Town officials and residents will support the Historical Society as they pursue other options, including the possible use of any space vacated by the Library in the Knowlton-Risteen building.</p> <p>We look forward to collaborating with the Historical Society to use display cases and create exhibits inside the Community Center.</p> |
| 28. | <p>(a) I would like to know what clean energy technologies were considered and why they couldn't be used.</p> <p>(b) If we can get Green Community or other grants to cover the incremental cost of clean energy technologies, can the clean-energy technologies be easily be integrated into the design of the building.</p> <p>(c) I understand that it is fairly common for buildings to be LEED-compliant but not LEED-certified due to the cost of certification. I believe it was mentioned that the Center would be LEED-compliant. Can you describe how the Center will be LEED-compliant?</p> <p>(d) What is the projected energy usage of Center as designed?</p> <p>(e) How much of that is related to increasing the size of the building and how much is related to costs increasing as a result of</p> | <p>(a, b, c, d)</p> <p>The Building Committee received many comments from town officials and residents asking about the 'green friendly' features of the project. While the project is not pursuing the LEED certification process (which incurs additional reporting and certification costs), the designer and committee are keeping LEED goals in mind, and have identified many areas where the proposed design would qualify for LEED points and LEED certification.</p> <p>Geothermal heating was evaluated as one of three options for the building's HVAC systems. Our preferred displacement ventilation system scored best on lifetime cost. The displacement system also provided significantly better contaminate control inside the building.</p> <p>Solar panels are not included in the project scope, but could be installed later.</p> <p>A rainwater recapture system (rain barrel collecting roof run off) and electrical car charging stations are included in the project.</p> <p>The design energy model indicates that the building as designed will consume greater than 40% less energy than a baseline building fully meeting the stringent Building Code and Energy Code requirements. This building will perform 40%+ better than another code compliant building. The project design documents have been forwarded to the local utility company to take advantage of their energy rebate programs, which</p> |

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| | <p>the pandemic? Are there any other factors that contributed to the change?</p> <p>(f) It would also be helpful to me to know whether or not the number of parking spaces meets guidelines established for libraries and senior centers and whether or not it meets our zoning standards.</p> | <p>essentially pay the Owner for energy cost savings measures.</p> <p>(e) Yes, in two main ways. First, our choices for HVAC system were heavily influenced by a desire to use all fresh air for ventilation and have the best contaminate removal possible. The planned system is a displacement ventilation system, where all fresh air comes in low to the floor, and pushes old air upwards along with contaminants where it is removed from the building, instead of recirculating. The filtration can accommodate MERV-13 or better filtration along with UV disinfection units. Secondly, the floorplan introduced more separation between the CoA and Library services, with the infrastructure in place for emergency measures if needed. While we hope these measures are not required, the design allows for the CoA and great room to be divided from the Library space, and the programs room could be isolated for no-contact services with outside access.</p> <p>(f) The shared parking agreement allows flexibility in assessing parking needs with the goal of reducing overall pavement areas in the center of town. The Zoning By Law allows a 30% reduction of parking spaces for competing uses in the UCBD. 85 spaces is approximately 30% below the required parking for the VFW and UCC. This is subject to review by the Upton Planning Board through the Site Plan Review process. Additionally, an independent traffic engineer is evaluating parking and other related traffic impact issues.</p> |
| 29. | <p>Is it wise to create a building with an energy source of the past that we know contributes to global warming, instead of an energy source we know will be the future?</p> | <p>The Building Committee received many comments from town officials and residents asking about the 'green friendly' features of the project. While the project is not pursuing the LEED certification process (which incurs additional reporting and certification costs), the designer and committee are keeping LEED goals in mind, and have identified many areas where the proposed design would qualify for LEED points and LEED certification.</p> <p>Geothermal heating was evaluated as one of three options for the building's HVAC systems. Our preferred displacement ventilation system scored best on lifetime cost. The displacement system also provided significantly better contaminate control inside the building.</p> <p>Solar panels are not included in the project scope, but could be installed later.</p> |

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| | | <p>A rainwater recapture system (rain barrel collecting roof run off) and electrical car charging stations are included in the project.</p> <p>The design energy model indicates that the building as designed will consume greater than 40% less energy than a baseline building fully meeting the stringent Building Code and Energy Code requirements. This building will perform 40%+ better than another code compliant building. The project design documents have been forwarded to the local utility company to take advantage of their energy rebate programs, which essentially pay the Owner for energy cost savings measures.</p> |
| 31. | <p>(a) What building design options did the CCBC consider to have a smaller footprint multi-story to maximize land area for parking?</p> <p>(b) What are the project goals to contribute to our Green Community Designation commitments and was there any consideration given to building energy and carbon footprint reductions to contribute to the Regional Greenhouse Gas Reductions of the Green Communities Act of 2012?</p> <p>(c) Did the design accommodate or plan for connections to future walking paths along the Center Brook and a Milford Street Sidewalk was included in the Downtown Vision Plan and our Community' Complete Streets Program? What is the primary goal this project is trying to achieve in contributing to the overarching goal to redevelop and revitalize the Downtown?</p> | <p>(a) For a building of this size, the committee determined that the operating and design efficiencies of a single story outweighed the advantage of a smaller footprint of a two story building. During the conceptual design stage, a potential two story option was evaluated.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Library usage requires high load limits for a second story, making construction more expensive than for a residential or commercial building. Senior Center space should be on the first floor for accessibility. 2) Splitting services across two stories contradicted our goals of sharing space between the departments, and created excess 'unassigned' space (hallways, stairs.) The single story design has functional spaces that connect and flow into each other, providing maximum flexibility and future adaptability. 3) A single story minimizes service points, reducing the staffing requirements of operating the building. <p>(b) The Building Committee received many comments from town officials and residents asking about the 'green friendly' features of the project. While the project is not pursuing the LEED certification process (which incurs additional reporting and certification costs), the designer and committee are keeping LEED goals in mind, and have identified many areas where the proposed design would qualify for LEED points and LEED certification.</p> <p>Geothermal heating was evaluated as one of three options for the building's HVAC systems. Our preferred displacement ventilation system scored best on lifetime cost. The displacement system also provided significantly better contaminate control inside the building.</p> |

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| | | <p>Solar panels are not included in the project scope, but could be installed later.</p> <p>A rainwater recapture system (rain barrel collecting roof run off) and electrical car charging stations are included in the project.</p> <p>The design energy model indicates that the building as designed will consume greater than 40% less energy than a baseline building fully meeting the stringent Building Code and Energy Code requirements. This building will perform 40%+ better than another code compliant building. The project design documents have been forwarded to the local utility company to take advantage of their energy rebate programs, which essentially pay the Owner for energy cost savings measures.</p> <p>(c) The Upton Center Visioning Project Report was approved by the town meeting in May 2019, and used as the basis for creation of the Upton Center Business District zoning regulations. The report identifies 10 goals on page 99, which represent the final recommendations of the planning process.</p> <p>One of those goals directly concerns the community center: <i>"Site the proposed Library/Community Center and Historical Society Museum within walking distance of Town Hall, if possible. If possible, means if there is a site that is adequate to meet the needs of the facilities."</i></p> <p>The proposed project also addresses 3 additional goals: <i>"Activate Upton Center and make it the heart of community life in the Town."</i> <i>"Maintain the Center's village scale and building types. New buildings should be no more than three stories."</i> <i>"Provide adequate parking."</i></p> |
| 32. | I was reviewing the design and project estimate costs and wondered what is included in the line item for "IT - Phone/Data/Internet/Cable"? | <p>Design, cabling, equipment, and programming for data, telephone, internet and cable TV systems.</p> <p>Current plans include 7 public computer workstations (with space to add more up to 11). A business center with public copier / scanner / fax machine, along with supporting tools such as paper cutter, diecut, long arm stapler.</p> <p>LCD screens for public use in the conference room and one study room. Guest</p> |

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